



TOWN OF

KENSINGTON

DECEMBER
2001
JOURNAL

January 28th Town Meeting Agenda

Guest Speaker, Kevin Nowak from State Highway Administration – Progress of Metropolitan Avenue

Meeting Schedule

January 7, 7:00 p.m. Work Session
January 28, 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting

Mark Your Calendars

**The Town Office will be closed on the following dates:
December 24, December 25, January 1, and January 21**

There will be no trash pick up on December 24 and January 21.
There will be a special trash pick up on December 26 for trash only, no brush.
Regular pick up will resume on Friday, December 28.
Thank you for your cooperation.

Holiday Gifts for the Town Crew

If you would like to show your appreciation to the Town crew,
please bring or send gifts to Town Hall by December 20th.

Contact us at 3710 Mitchell Street, Kensington, MD 20895
Phone: 301-949-2424 Fax: 301-949-4925; E-mail: mayor.council@tok.org; Website: www.tok.org

Thank You

Thank you to all the citizens that organized the candle light gathering at the train station and to the Tree Lighting Committee.

Snow Policy

In case of a winter storm, please park vehicles in driveways when possible or park on the even side of the street on even dates and the odd side on odd dates. Remember to clear the walkway in front of your property within 24 hours after a storm. *This is a Town Ordinance.*

Lost and Found

Items have been found in Clum-Kennedy Park. Please contact Louise at (301) 949-2424.

Announcements

The MARC Train schedule has changed effective December 10. New schedules are available in the Town office.

The Town's website now has a link to the County's Emergency Information.

Community Forum: Coming Together After September 11

The County is having several forums which include topics on emergency planning, family/individual preparedness, bio-terrorism information, economic impact, and community unity. The following is a list of dates and locations. For more information call (240) 777-2500.

January 8, 7:30 p.m. - The Tilden Center
January 22, 7:30 p.m. - East County Community Center
February 5, 7:30 p.m. - Crossway Community Center
February 21, 7:30 p.m. - Germantown Community Recreation Center

Reminders

Be courteous to your neighbors. Quiet hours are in effect weekdays 9 p.m. – 7 a.m. and weekends/holidays 9 p.m. – 9 a.m.

Please keep shrubs and trees trimmed so they don't overhang on public sidewalks.

Pick up after your pet. It's the law.

Do not put waste/recycling containers curbside until the evening before pick-up. Remove waste/recycling containers from curb side after pick-up.

Mixed paper recycling items must be placed in a paper bag curbside by 7 a.m. each Wednesday.

Building Permits

Erect Shed at 3920 Washington Street

Mayor's Report

- On November 23 Kinnaird Co. began to install our memorial. The process has taken a long time and the Mayor has spent much time in phone conversations with the insurance company and the memorial company. However, the finished product will be well worth waiting for. The memorial is almost complete as of this Journal.
- Council Member Cowan and the Mayor had several meetings this month to finalize recommendations to the Council for the proposed Employee Manual.
- Overseeing the window work on the Armory has been an ongoing effort for several weeks.
- Had a meeting with a proposed new theater group, we are waiting for a proposal from them and will schedule around other groups using the community center.
- Attended a meeting to discuss planning and zoning authority as a possibility for Prince George's and Montgomery County. This is a Priority Bill being introduced by the Maryland Municipal League.
- Attended a Wheaton Kensington Board of Directors Meeting. This year the Kensington Volunteer Fire Dept. has been added to the Chamber's list of recipients for dinner served to those on duty on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. The Chamber is becoming more active in Kensington we are happy to report.
- Conducted an all day meeting in Annapolis on strategic planning for the Maryland Municipal League.
- Attended a Legislative dinner in North Beach Maryland representing the Town of Kensington and the Maryland Municipal League.
- Each month much time is spent on phone calls and letter writing to State and County officials. This is a daily function of the Mayor and requires continual follow up. Answering telephone calls and emails from citizens and businesses in our Town as well as walk in visits from citizens are all part of the Mayor's daily activity.
- Each week the Mayor tours the Town by car and on foot looking for areas in need of attention. An example of findings on one of these tours is Detrick Avenue between Knowles Avenue and Howard Avenue. This commercial area was one of the worst eyesores in our Town. First, a survey was conducted to establish rights-of-way. Next, we regained green space on Howard Avenue adjacent to the shopping center. Then we paved the street from Knowles to Howard Avenue and put stripes on each side of the street to show approved parking areas. Businesses were notified, by letter, that they must park behind the white line. The street work is complete and vehicles are complying with parking regulations. Thus, we have a safer street that also looks much improved to all that live in and visit our Town.

Leaf Removal

- In answer to questions concerning leaf removal, upon Mr. Joel's return in September from injured leave he ordered leafing equipment. The equipment was installed on November 1 and leafing began the next day. Under Mr. Joel's direction the crew started to remove leaves in the section of Town where most leaves had been raked. The leaves are being stored in North Kensington lot until all leafing has been completed at which time they will be taken to a County facility.

Next year will be better organized because we have the equipment and can have it ready to start as soon as needed. Mr. Joel will send out a leaf schedule before leafing starts in the fall 2002 so that you can plan your leaf raking to coincide.

When leafing is completed this year the trucks will be outfitted for snow removal. Remember our fleet and number of crewmembers are small and both are used for a variety of jobs.

- We have had several crewmembers out on injured leave and one crewmember that had been on injured leave is no longer with us. There is turn over in public works as the job is physically demanding and from time to time injuries require short-term disability leave and we are left short-handed. However, we did have leafing continue on several Saturday's this month to help keep up with the schedule.
- We are pleased to announce that we have hired three crewmembers in the last three months. The crew number is now seven including the supervisor Jamie Simms.

Council Member Bruch's Report

November, 2001

I requested that Montgomery County consider installing several hundred feet of missing sidewalk on the south side of Plyers Mill Road between the Getty Station and the railroad bridge. This portion of Plyers Mill which experiences heavy AM and PM peak-hour traffic does not have a sidewalk on either side of the street.

Bus Shelter Update – I've had discussions with State Highway and Montgomery County officials in effort to find alternative funding sources for upgrading or adding bus shelters. Bus shelters may be a qualifying expense under a special State program to enhance public transportation. This would allow us to design/build our own shelters (without advertising) as an alternative to participating in a program whereby a third-party provides the shelters at no cost in exchange for long-term advertising rights.

Armory Window Restoration Project Update – The work is progressing well and the architect and historic representatives are pleased with the quality of workmanship. On another note, I may have found someone willing to produce a video documentary on the project. Our building is the last remaining Armory in the County and the Town's historic preservation/restoration efforts may be worthy of a video documentary.

Council Member Cowan's Report

November Report

1. Met with KP Elementary School PTA to discuss pending changes in the KP modernization program.
2. Wrote and delivered testimony to the Montgomery County School Board protesting their decision to divert capital construction funds from KP to other clusters and schools.
3. Drafted letter to County Council requesting funds for KP.
4. Worked with Susan Engels and the Mayor to complete drafts of the TOK Personnel manual to be presented to the Council.
5. Reviewed report from Montgomery County police on the recently completed traffic enforcement experiment. The Traffic Committee will meet to discuss this and other items.

Council Member Scharman's Report

Discussed upcoming emergency preparedness seminars with Town Clerk, Susan Engels. Montgomery County's Office of Emergency Preparedness is scheduling community seminars throughout the County.

We are working to help keep Town residents, businesses, and citizens in the surrounding community informed about opportunities to learn more about disaster planning.

Drafted Resolution to Honor First Responders for signature by Mayor and Council. This resolution echoes a U. S. House of Representatives resolution honoring first responders to the September 11 attacks and pledging to work with all levels of government to prepare first responders and citizens for future terrorist attacks. The House resolution also requested President Bush to urge all communities across the country to pay respects to their first responder community.

Drafted Proclamation for Mayor and Council signature for use at the Tree Lighting Ceremony. This proclamation was intended to honor first responders, express appreciation for postal workers, and recognize military forces deployed at home and abroad.

Attended meeting, held by County Council Member Steve Silverman and County Department of Recreation, regarding possible recreational uses of the gym and other facilities at the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC).

Had several meeting and discussions with residents regarding landscaping plans for the Town parks.

Contacted administrators at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources regarding grant programs for parks.

Attended quarterly meeting of the Tree Board. Minutes of that meeting are found in this copy of the Journal.

Tree Board Meeting

November 14, 2001

Barbara Scharman, Anne Elsbree, John Anderson, Louise Hamilton, Mark Joel and Sabooh Hikim attended.

The new member, John Anderson, was welcomed to the committee.

The State forester, Sabooh Hikim, is planting crepe myrtle on the median at University Blvd. near the ADA ramp. He is checking into tree inventory software so we can better track the status of Town trees and their maintenance and plan for future plantings. He gave each member a copy of the County Recommended Tree List.

It was decided due to weather conditions, fall planting will be delayed until mid March, 2002. At this time 10 to 12 new trees are scheduled for planting.

The Tree Board would like to be involved in the landscape plan for Ernest Memorial Park.

The Board expressed an interest in giving recommendations for new commercial landscaping. The Mayor has indicated that the Commercial Revitalization Committee has that responsibility. The Tree Board makes recommendations for Town of Kensington property.

The Board will meet again in February, 2002. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Town Meeting

November 26, 2001

Mayor Raufaste called the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with Council Members Bruch, Cowan, Pfautz, Scharman, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A Moment of Silence was observed for the tragic events of September 11th.

A public hearing was held on the petition received requesting a speed bump on Wake Drive at the Town line. All nine residents on Wake Drive signed the petition. Residents expressed their concerns that the street was very dangerous and that the traffic needed to be slowed down. There was no opposition to the speed bump at the hearing. The type of speed bump requested was a medium size bump similar to the speed bump that already exists on that street.

A public hearing was held on the request for No Parking Signs on Frederick Avenue between Frederick Place and Kent Street. At the hearing there was no one present in favor of the request. Some residents stated that the problem had resolved itself and that not as many cars are parked in that section of Frederick Avenue. The Council deferred making a decision now and will readdress in the future if it becomes necessary.

The Mayor and Council presented monthly reports.

Residents discussed the following issues with the Council and Mayor; leafing plan, paving priorities, debris on railroad side of Metropolitan Avenue, pot holes on Lexington Street, cement plant closing, empty building on St. Paul Street (former barber shop) and two lots the Town may own.

Council Actions

Council Member Cowan moved to accept the recommendation of the petition for the speed bump on Wake Drive and install a second speed bump as close to the east Town line as possible. It was seconded by Council Member Bruch and passed unanimously with the Mayor concurring.

Council Member Pfautz moved to approve the minutes of the October 29 Town Meeting and the November 5 Work Session as circulated. It was seconded by Council Member Scharman and passed unanimously.

Council Member Cowan moved to confirm the following four people to serve as citizens of the Town on the Coalition of Kensington Communities, Wendy Lesko, Tracey Furman, Al Carr, and Sabina Emerson. It was seconded by Council Member Bruch and passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to approve the Recognition of First Responders Resolution, No. 2001-01, introduced by Council Member Scharman. It was seconded by Council Member Bruch and passed unanimously with the Mayor concurring.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Work Session of Mayor & Council

December 3, 2001

The work session commenced at 7:00 p.m., Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Bruch, Cowan, Pfautz and Scharman, Director of Public Works Joel, Code Enforcement Officer Hamilton, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present and the following issues were addressed:

Public Works Director Joel discussed this year's leaf pickup which will be completed within the next week. The Mayor and Council asked that a flyer be sent out informing residents of the final leaf pickup and then next year a leafing schedule be established.

The storage trailer behind the Kensington Shopping Center was discussed. Council Member Pfautz obtained copies from MML of two other municipal ordinances that could be applied. Council Member Bruch suggested that we should, first, see if the problem can be resolved by determining if the shopping center complies with parking requirements since the storage trailer occupies several spaces.

The project list was reviewed and updated.

The code enforcement action list was reviewed

George Myers was present and requested a variance from the 10-foot side yard setback requirement for 10314 Fawcett Street. He stated that the proposed addition would be approximately 8.2 feet from the lot line instead of the 10 feet. The variance was necessary because the Town's building code refers to lot lines not property lines and the addition would still be approximately 58 feet from the property line. It was noted that the lot coverage for the proposal is 14% - which is within the percentage guidelines in the *Vision of Kensington* - as long as the three lots are considered as a whole. Council Member Cowan moved to grant the variance as requested. Council Member Scharman seconded it. Council Member Bruch moved to amend the motion to include that the variance be applicable only to the design before them. Council Member Cowan seconded the amendment to his motion and the amendment passed unanimously and the amended motion to grant the variance as requested applicable to the design presented passed unanimously.

The Mayor and Council discussed a request for a moveable basketball hoop to be placed on the Town lot but did not see it as advisable because of safety concerns. The Mayor and Council did discuss the possibility of a small basketball court at Reinhardt Park.

Council Member Cowan presented a letter he drafted to the County Council requesting funding for Kensington Parkwood Elementary School modernization. The Mayor and Council suggested it be redrafted to include the age of the school, the low facility scores, and the tone of the letter changed.

Council Member Bruch will have a title company research the two lots at HOC to determine whether the Town still owns them.

The HOC gymnasium was discussed. The Mayor stated she would contact Steve Silverman to request the minutes from the meeting held on November 28 and find out if there is any outcome and their proposed direction. Council Member Bruch stated the Town should solicit input from residents and take an official position on the interim use and their longer-term vision. Council Member Cowan stated that HOC would rather be

part of the Wheaton revitalization and suggested that it is in our best interest to support that.

Minutes from the November 26 Town Meeting were reviewed and corrected.

The monthly correspondence was reviewed.

Council Member Bruch stated that the Town needs a uniform, consistent plan adopted for the maintenance of brick sidewalks that cross driveway aprons in the historic district. He presented two options for brick sidewalks when they cross a driveway, a concrete method and a brick and concrete method. He stated that in order to maintain a safe passable sidewalk, brick would have to be placed over a concrete substrate and the Town would need to consider the additional expense. Council Member Pfautz noted that the Town has a commitment to the historic district and the LAP to preserve the aesthetics of the historic district even if it means some additional financial obligation. The Mayor and Council suggested we find out how other historic districts handle this, find out the expense of installing the bricks the correct way, and clarify the HPC's jurisdiction over public right of way. The Mayor stated that she would follow up with a letter received from a citizen.

The Mayor presented a contract from the Washington Story Tellers for the use of the Armory. The Council requested a certificate of insurance and that the contract should state the Town is not responsible for set up or for providing overflow parking.

A resolution will be introduced at the next meeting to adopt part of the County Code regarding disclosure of historic designation at time of sale.

The Mayor and Council discussed ways to support the Old Town Merchants Association in response to the letter received from them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.